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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

WHIGS

OF

CHESTER COUNTY.



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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

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WHIGS OF CHESTER COUNTY,

FAVORABLE TO A DISTINCT ORGANIZATION

OF THE

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5373

WHIG PARTY.



PUBLISHED

BY ORDER OF A MEETING HELD AT THE HOUSE OF J. P. M'CLELLAN,
IN WEST CHESTER, NOV. 5, 1838.

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A MEETING preparatory to forming a ticket, having been called in the names of the WHIG Standing Committee, for the 7th August, in terms which included the Antimasons, it was thought best to give the WHIGS an opportunity of first having a separate meeting, which led to this call.

WHIG MEETING.

THE WHIGS of Chester county are requested to meet at the house of JOSEPH P. M'CLELLAN, in the borough of West Chester, on Monday, the sixth of August next, at two o'clock, P. M., to take the usual necessary steps preparatory to the ensuing election, and to effect a more perfect organization of the Whig party.

Ziba Pyle,
Emmor Thomas,
Abner Garrett, jr.
George Thomas,
Joel Pennock,
John Travilla,
Emmor Worth,
Thomas Travilla,
David Walton,
Reuben Pusey,
Israel Pusey,
William P. Miner,
Samuel Irwin,
Philip P. Sharpless,
Joseph P. M'Clellan,
Thomas S. Woodward,
Townsend Haines,

David Townsend,
William Williamson,
J. W. Townsend,
Isaac Thomas,
George Brinton,
John James,
Ennion Cook,
William H. Dillingham,
Jonathan Valentine,
Eusebius Townsend,
Richard M. Thomas,
John Tweddle,
B. F. Haines,
Jonathan Jones,
James Powell,
Hoopes M'Call.

July 30, 1838.

PROCEEDINGS.

AT a meeting of the WHIGS of Chester county, held at the house of Joseph P. McClellan, in the borough of West Chester, the sixth day of August, A. D. 1838.

On motion, JOHN GILLIES, Esq., was appointed President, JOHN JAMES and JAMES POWELL, Vice Presidents, and Matthias Pennypacker, Esq., of West Bradford, and Paschall Morris, Secretaries.

Mr. Haines briefly stated the objects of the meeting. When, on motion, Dr. ISAAC THOMAS, JOEL PENNOCK, THOMAS S. WOODWARD, JONATHAN JONES, WILLIAM BAKER, BALDWIN WEAVER, and WILLIAM WILLIAMSON, DAVID TOWNSEND, BRINTON DARLINGTON, were appointed a committee to report proceedings for the consideration of the meeting. Who, having retired for a short time, unanimously reported the following preamble and resolutions, which were separately read and unanimously adopted by the meeting.

PREAMBLE.

To obtain an organization of the Whig party in Chester county, and to consult on the proper steps to be taken to give strength to Whig principles at the ensuing general election, are the primary objects of this meeting. The former of these are considered of no small importance, and we would, therefore, earnestly recommend it to the consideration of our political friends throughout the state.

For several years the Whigs of Pennsylvania have had no distinctive organization. Leaving to others the control of nominations and the formation of tickets, they acquiesced in a state of things which they could not approve, and endeavored to sustain their own principles by choosing between evils.

The adoption of this course induced many of our friends to join in the ranks of the Jackson party, and led the main body of the Whigs to unite with and assist the Antimasons in the election of their candidates. Either alternative required sacrifices which were painful to make.

As it is our desire to avoid disturbances and bitterness of feeling, and it is unnecessary for our present purpose, it might be improper to recur to the causes which led to this unpleasant political position:—but it must be admitted by all, that they were neither indifference to our rights, nor want of intelligence to advocate them. It is time, however, that this state of things should be changed. In *fifteen states* of the Union, Whig principles have triumphed, and the Whig banner floats victoriously over the prostrate colours of Jacksonism. The irresistible popularity of that name which swept away all opposition even without a struggle, which overturned the settled policy of the government, and established on the ruins of venerated institutions, the crude experiments of untaught innovators, which mocked the wisdom of the fathers of the government and employed the

constitution of the country for the purposes of personal ambition—that popularity has not fallen on the present executive, and he follows in the perilous “footsteps of his illustrious predecessor,” without the panoply which secured him from defeat.

With harmony of action among ourselves, and a determination to use all honorable means to promote success, it is confidently believed that the next election for the Presidency will result favourably to the Whig cause. This is indeed ‘a consummation most devoutly to be wished.’ It becomes, therefore, our duty to prepare for the conflict. While other states are marching to the rescue of the constitution, and while the cheering shouts of victory are reaching us from every quarter, shall we not lend our aid to the glorious achievement of bringing back the ark of our political safety? We can not—we dare not refuse our aid in the struggle of our political brethren for the predominance of Whig principles.

At the late session of the national legislature, the Whig members of Congress, having consulted together, unanimously recommended December, 1839, for the meeting of a National Convention to nominate a suitable candidate for the Presidency; and it is desirable that every state in the Union should be fully represented in that convention.

If we desire to have an electoral ticket for the individual on whom the choice of that convention shall fall, it is highly necessary that we should be represented, and to be effectively represented by men of our own party, we must have organization. Without organization we are without representation, and must rely on some other party even for liberty to vote as we are directed; therefore,

Resolved, That it is expedient to organize the Whig party upon a separate, distinct and permanent basis; and for that purpose, that a committee of seven members, also two secretaries and a treasurer be now appointed, to continue in office one year; and that said committee and secretaries have power to call meetings of the party at such times as they shall judge expedient.

Resolved, That we approve of the recommendation made by the Whig members of Congress, that a National Convention be held at Harrisburg in December, 1839, for the purpose of nominating candidates for President and Vice President, and that we hereby pledge ourselves to abide by and support such nominations, as shall be then made.

Resolved, That we have great confidence in the talents and integrity of Henry Clay, of Kentucky, the able defender of the true interests and honor of the country, and strongly urge his claims to the highest office in the gift of the people.

Resolved, That we approve of the general course pursued by the present Governor of this commonwealth, having full confidence in his integrity and patriotism, and that we will cordially unite in his support at the coming election.

Resolved, That the course pursued by our representative in Congress from this county meets our decided approbation, and that we have entire confidence in his integrity and abilities.

Resolved, That in case of a change of representative in Congress from this county, the Whigs claim the right to nominate the candidate from their party.

Resolved, That we will unite with the Antimasonic party in supporting a ticket at the coming election, upon the following terms, viz: 1st. That

a fair and equal portion of the ticket shall be taken from the Whig party.
 2d. That the Whigs and Antimasons respectively shall name their own candidates, and that each party shall support the ticket in good faith.

Resolved, That the Whigs meet in their respective townships on the day of _____ and elect one delegate to represent the township in a general meeting of delegates to be held at the house of _____ on the _____ day of _____ to form a ticket.

Resolved, That the committee of conference and correspondence be requested to meet a similar committee from the Antimasonic party, and arrange the offices for which the two parties are to select candidates, agreeably to the foregoing propositions.

Resolved, That Dr. Isaac Thomas, Ziba Pyle, Eusebius Townsend, Thomas S. Woodward, Amos Fredd, Townsend Haines and Edward Hibberd be the committee of conference and correspondence; that Jonathan Valentine and George Brinton, jr. be Secretaries; and that John Tweddle be Treasurer for the ensuing year.

Resolved, That the committee of conference and correspondence, together with John Gillies, Esq., John James, James Powell, Matthias Pennypacker, Esq., of West Bradford, Paschall Morris, M. Pennypacker, of Schuylkill, William Baker, George Brinton, jr., Robert Fairlamb, Philip P. Sharpless, John W. Townsend, Joel Pennock, Jonathan Jones, George Thomas, Ennion Cook, John Parker, James McFarlan, Esq., Benjamin F. Haines, Brinton Darlington, John Travilla, Jonathan Valentine, Jesse Matlack, Eli Pyle, of London Grove, Emmor Worth and Chalkley Jeffers, are hereby appointed to present the proceedings of this meeting to the meeting to be held at the Court House to-morrow, and request their concurrence therein.

Resolved, That the proceedings of this meeting be signed by the officers, and published in the Village Record, Register and Examiner, and Coatesville Star.

JOHN GILLIES, *President*.

JOHN JAMES, }
 JAMES POWELL, } *Vice Presidents.*

Attest—

M. PENNYPACKER, }
 PASCHALL MORRIS, } *Secretaries.*

The objects of the foregoing meeting not having been responded to, the following call was made.

WHIG MEETING.

The WHIGS of Chester county, who are favorable to a distinct organization of the *Whig party*, on the basis of the resolutions adopted by the meeting of the sixth instant, are requested to meet at the house of JACOB E. PARKE, in the village of Downingtown, on Saturday, the first day of September next, at twelve o'clock noon, for the purpose of taking measures preparatory to the ensuing general election.

ISAAC THOMAS,

AMOS FREDD,

T. S. WOODWARD,

EUSEBIUS TOWNSEND,

ZIBA PYLE,

TOWNSEND HAINES,

Committee of Correspondence.

Jona. Valentine, }
 Geo. Brinton, } *Secretaries.*

At a meeting of the WHIGS of Chester county, favorable to a distinct organization of the Whig party, held agreeable to public notice, at the house of JACOB E. PARKE in Downingtown, September 1, 1838.

JOHN JAMES was appointed Chairman,

ROBERT FUTHEY, THOMAS S. WOODWARD, JOEL PENNOCK, JONATHAN JONES, BRINTON DARLINGTON and WILLIAM H. BROWN, Vice Presidents, *Paschall Morris, Daniel Thompson, Morgan L. Reese and Elisha B. Taylor*, Secretaries.

On motion, it was resolved that a committee of twenty be appointed to draft resolutions expressive of the sense of this meeting, viz:

TOWNSEND HAINES,	HOOPES M'CALL,	WILLIAM WILLIAMSON,
AMOS FREDD,	DAVID TOWNSEND,	RICHARD PIM,
WILLIAM BAKER,	EPHRAIM WILSON,	ABNER GARRETT, JR.
ALLEN CHANDLER,	JESSE PUSEY,	JAMES T. BEAUMONT,
GEORGE BRINTON,	EDWARD GHEEN,	JOHN B. TAYLOR and
Dr. ISAAC THOMAS,	GERARD COPE,	PHILIP P. SHARPLESS.
JOHN GILLIES,	MATHIAS PENNYPACKER, Esq.	

Who, after retiring for a short time, reported the following address and resolutions, which on consideration were unanimously adopted.

ADDRESS.

It is now nearly ten years since a majority of the people of the United States, actuated mainly by a feeling of gratitude for eminent military services, united their voices in favor of Gen. Jackson as the head of this great Republic. A mere military chieftain, without experience or knowledge in national affairs, chosen from among better men as the most *available candidate* to catch the popular vote, when elevated to a station to which his highest ambition did not aspire, became at once the dupe of the demagogue and the credulous listener to the sycophant. Since that period a series of measures have been pursued, all tending to consolidate power in the Executive, and radically to impair the constitutional balances of the Government. The practice which had been settled by successive administrations, from the adoption of the constitution down to the period when he came into power, was made to give way to experiments of an untried character—the decisions of the Supreme Court were reversed at his dictation, and new interpretations given to the law and constitution consistent with his understanding of them. The veto power—a power never to be used except on extraordinary occasions, became a convenient instrument in his hands to control the legislative action. Without stopping to enumerate evils so repeatedly condemned and so loudly advocated, the results of which are so apparent in the condition of the country, it is gratifying to know that the Whigs have uniformly and steadfastly opposed them in every shape they were made to assume. Nor has their opposition been without effect. Although not successful to the full extent of their wishes, an ardent devotion to principle, by restraining the arm of power and limiting the extent of its means, has preserved the country from many of those pernicious measures which the madness of party, through its presumptuous leaders, imposed on its willing subordinates. Although in a minority, they brought to the rescue exalted talent, untiring perseverance and disinterested ardor to the best

interests of their country. Neither the changes of party, nor the seductions of office, nor the frowns of official authority were sufficient to divert them from their noble and patriotic stand in defence of the institutions of the country.

General Jackson rode into office on the wings of a foreboding excitement. The statesmen of the revolution, who had assisted in the establishment of the government of '97, had gone to their graves. That body of patriots from whom former executive offices had been selected was no more, and a choice was to be made from the great body of the people. The appropriate reverence for the fathers of the constitution, was not transmitted to their children, and the success of party was made dependent on new claims to honor and distinction. Hence, we beheld a man selected as the chief executive officer without talents for the station he was nominated to fill, with no experience in its important duties, and with confused and inconsistent ideas of the policy of the government he was about to direct. Hence, too, we saw a party rallied to his support by fierce denunciations of his opponents, by appeals to sectional interests, by unmeaning applause for his military services, and by impious adulation of his personal attributes. The consequences were foretold, but could not wholly be averted. Having by these means attained the seat once occupied by WASHINGTON, and relying on his unbounded, yet transient popularity to perpetuate his authority, he directed his movements to the accomplishment of his objects, unrestrained by the fear of consequences; while the voice of warning, the appeals of patriotism, the prophetic teachings of experience, and the thunders of indignant justice were unheard, amid the tumbling ruins of the constitution.

In the national legislature, the usurpations of executive authority were met with the firmest resistance. Here the Whigs of the Union were represented by a band of men as fearless, devoted and intelligent as ever shed lustre over a country. They resisted every experiment of a reckless party while resistance could avail, and with the truth of prophecy warned the country of the disastrous consequences which would result from its adoption. No personal sacrifice was deemed too valuable to make in the glorious cause in which they were engaged, nor did any movement of the adverse party, however insidious, escape their vigilance. Under the broad banner of their country they were arrayed; here they bravely contested every syllable of dictation, whether it came from the idol or the worshipper; if defeated, it was here they rallied, and beneath its tattered folds they yet stand an unbroken phalanx, with their faces to a disheartened and recoiling foe.

The contest, however, is not at an end. The adversary has possession of the citadel, and our exertions must not be relaxed. The outworks are falling, the exultation of triumphant coadjutors encourage us to the conflict, and, strong in the principles which have heretofore sustained us, we must unite our strength in the common cause, that we may join in the general jubilee of victory.

How is this to be effected? In this State, the position of the Whigs is peculiar. About the period when Jacksonism became the rallying cry of party, there arose another political phenomenon, whose discordant materials were drawn from every party, and the strength of whose union was hatred to the Masonic Institution. Here they soon gained considerable strength, and becoming organised for greater efficiency, their first

political movement of a decisive character was the selection of a ticket without reference to political principles. In this selection Masons were carefully excluded, whether they belonged to a lodge, or had withdrawn from all participation in its proceedings; while Jackson men and Whigs, those who cherished a love for the national constitution as expounded by the Supreme Court, and those who were desirous to make their great political head the sole interpreter of that instrument as he understood it, were placed side by side on the same extraordinary ticket. All the landmarks of party were broken down, and the questions arising from violated treaties, national injustice, Indian sufferings, war and peace, were thrown aside as petty trifling when weighed in comparison with the important design of Antimasonry. This was a state of things as strange as it was unexpected. Many of the Whigs, unable to support this singular amalgamation, seeing their own party organization dissolved and themselves utterly powerless, by almost insensible changes ranged on the side of Jacksonism as the least of evils, and as the only means by which they could successfully oppose Antimasonry. It is a question difficult to decide even now, when years have passed over us, whether these men were right or wrong.

On the other hand, a large majority of the Whigs of the State, seeing that the Antimasons arranged themselves in opposition to the National and State administrations, and being indifferent as to the motives which effected so desirable an object, with a generous sacrifice of personal feelings, united with and assisted in the election of the Antimasonic ticket. When, however, the first four years of Gen. Jackson's tenure of office was about to expire, and the Whigs of other States were preparing to contest his re-election, the Whigs of Pennsylvania knowing that Antimasonry was limited to a few States, and supposing, as was reasonable to expect, that it would bring no candidate into the field, held a Convention and nominated an Electoral ticket for President and Vice President. The result cannot fail to be remembered. With strange indifference to the public good, this singular party also held a Convention, nominated a ticket, and placed before the public other names for the same offices. Again, a noble and generous sacrifice on the part of the Whigs united the opposition strength, which otherwise would have been divided without even the hope of success to either division. We will draw no comparison between the individuals thus put in nomination; but we cannot avoid declaring that our confidence was unbounded in the ability, integrity and fidelity of our candidates. Since that election, the Whigs have formed no ticket in the State, and, with a few worthy exceptions, have been unrepresented in Congress.

In this county, the Masons have done every thing to allay excitement, which ought to be asked of honorable men. More generous than their opponents, they have believed that a large portion of the Antimasonic party were honestly alarmed at the institution of Masonry, and hoping that the suppression of the lodges would restore peace and confidence to the community, they have discontinued their meetings and returned their warrants. This course, we believe, would have produced the desired effect, had the leaders of the party been willing to give away the "spoils of victory" and the loaves of office; but while they continue to command the confidence of their followers, we can scarcely hope for a favorable change. How then, we repeat, can we unite in the common cause of

free government with our political brethren of the Union? We answer, *by tearing loose the chains which bind us to the fortunes of Antimasonry, asserting our rights as citizens, and ORGANIZING AS A POLITICAL PARTY.* To the accomplishment of these objects we pledge our best exertions, by all honorable means within our power, now and henceforward.

To the Whigs of Chester county we offer the hand of fellowship and friendship in the good cause, and call on them, as they love and reverence the justice of equal liberty on which our free government was established—as they value the name and glory of our common country, and the defenders of its fame and character at home and abroad, to unite with us in exertion, as they do in sentiment, to carry out our principles unpoluted by the whims and caprices—the petty electioneering and official humbugs of any party. The present state of things in this county is not to be endured; it is too plain that the Whigs are used to give effect to principles which they do not recognize. If it could be conceded that there was, in truth, no difference in principle between the Whigs and Antimasons, then, indeed, we might with propriety rally under the Antimasonic banner. But so long as that party continue their denunciation and disfranchisement of a large portion of our citizens, whom we deem entitled to our highest political confidence, and carry principles into the election which are diametrically opposed to our sense of equal rights, it would be no less than treason to the great Whig party of the Union, to concede to their uncompromising demands.

Resolved, That we have entire confidence in the patriotism, integrity and abilities of Henry Clay, and earnestly recommend that the Whigs of this county and state, take early measures to ensure his nomination for the office of President of the United States.

Resolved, That we will support Joseph Ritner for the office of Governor of this commonwealth, believing that by so doing we will most effectually subserve the interests of our Whig brethren of the State, and that by the re-election of the present incumbent, we shall most successfully check the progress of Van Burenism, and the pernicious effects of the doctrines and principles of the national administration.

Resolved, That the meeting held at West Chester on the 7th ult. in refusing to accede to the reasonable request of the meeting of Whigs held on the 6th, violated one of the plainest principles of justice, and that by following up their doctrines in the selection of a ticket, contrary to the wishes and in violation of the principles laid down by the meeting last mentioned, have forfeited all claim to our support upon any other grounds than that of choosing the least of two evils.

Resolved, That we hereby pledge ourselves in future elections, not to support any ticket which shall not be formed upon fair and equitable principles, but that we will insist upon selecting such candidates as we shall deem our party entitled to, without the dictation or influence of any other party.

Resolved, That it is inexpedient to nominate a ticket for the support of the Whig party at the ensuing election, and that we recommend our friends to pursue such course in reference to the candidates placed before them, as will in their judgments best subserve the Whig cause.

Resolved, That the Whigs of Chester county, who are disposed to unite with us upon the basis of the meeting held at the house of Joseph P. Mc-

Clellan, in West Chester on the 6th ult., be requested to meet at that place, in West Chester, on the first Monday in November next, to consult upon such further measures as may be necessary to promote the success of the Whig cause, and that the Secretaries give due notice thereof.

Resolved. That inasmuch as false statements have been circulated with regard to the views and objects of our party, the committee of correspondence be requested to publish an address, explanatory of our objects and principles of action, to the Whigs of Chester county.

On motion,

Resolved. That the proceedings of this meeting be published in the Village Record, Register and Examiner and Coatesville Star.

JOHN JAMES, *Chairman.*

ROBERT FUTHEY,	} <i>Vice Presidents.</i>
THOMAS S. WOODWARD,	
JOEL PENNOCK,	
JONATHAN JONES,	
BRINTON DARLINGTON,	
WILLIAM H. BROWN,	

<i>Paschall Morris,</i>	} <i>Secretaries.</i>
<i>Daniel Thompson,</i>	
<i>Morgan L. Reese,</i>	
<i>Elisha B. Taylor,</i>	

TO THE WHIGS OF CHESTER COUNTY.

FELLOW-CITIZENS—At a meeting of our political friends at Downingtown, on the first of September last, we were instructed to address you in explanation of their objects and principles of action, and in contradiction of the false statements which had been circulated. This meeting emanated from a meeting at West Chester, which had been called prior to the formation of the ticket, with a view to obtain simple justice to the Whig party in the selection of candidates, as explained by their proceedings which have been published. It should be known, that prior to this call they had exhausted their efforts with the chairman of the standing committee, to make a distinct call of our political friends for *preliminary consultation*, without including those whose cardinal rule of action is opposition to Masonry.

The necessity of this was felt to be imperative, from the consideration that a portion of the Antimasonic party had, last fall, refused to support the ticket regularly nominated in joint convention of Whigs and Antimasons. We had seen the effort made and extensively countenanced, to establish a supervision over the doings of the regular County Convention. To the last it was insisted on, by a public meeting, that they would not support a candidate who did not come up to the standard of Antimasonic Orthodoxy. The result proved that they carried out these principles at the ballot box, and that a large portion of our political colleagues did not hold themselves bound by the proceedings of our joint convention. So far from disclaiming all sympathy with the individuals who took this course, the officers of this exclusive meeting had received afterwards, marked tokens of the highest Antimasonic confidence, as if

purposely to reward them for their public stand against the nomination of "Masonic Whigs," in joint convention.

The chairman of the standing committee however, it seems, did not wish to have any separate consultation among the Whigs, and was able to impress his own views upon a majority of the committee. His call was so framed as to invite those who had thus recently given a public pledge, never to support a class of Whigs which includes HENRY CLAY. Such an invitation was deemed by us to hold out some hope, not to say promise, of conceding all that distinguishes Whigs from Antimasons as a political party. Availing themselves of this readiness to yield, the Antimasons did not hesitate, at their meeting at Marshallton, to re-assert their *peculiar* and *distinctive* political principles, in the very faces of the Whigs, and to proclaim these as the great corner stone of all political action. In accordance with this, they appointed on their committee to confer with the Whigs as to the formation of a ticket, the Secretary of the meeting, who stood pledged to go for no "Masonic Whig," however nominated in joint convention.

We solicit now your candid attention to the proceedings of our first meeting at West Chester. We asked there, only justice to the Whigs. No one has a right to impute to us other motives or designs. The chairman of the Whig standing committee thought it right to publish the proceedings of the Antimasons at Marshallton, with marked commendation, and at the same time denounced our Whig meeting as "factious" and "disorganizing." A strenuous and persevering effort was made to misrepresent the motives and undervalue the patriotism of our movement. Our recommendations were spurned, and our committee refused all participation in the arrangements for forming a joint ticket. The result is known.

Will any Whig in the county say, that after having conceded to the Antimasons the Congressmen for eight years, and the State Senator for eight years, and assisted to elect them, we should not have had our own choice in the nomination of these candidates? Can any Whig in the county be so blind as not to see that the great controlling *secret* of the late nominations was opposition to "Masonic Whigs?"

With such nominations before us, our meeting was convened at Downingtown, in pursuance of a resolution of the first meeting at West Chester. A committee of twenty was appointed to prepare an address, which received the unanimous approval of the meeting, and concludes in these words:

"The present state of things in this county is not to be endured; it is too plain that the Whigs are used to give effect to principles which they do not recognize. If it could be conceded that there was, in truth, no difference in principle between the Whigs and Antimasons—then, indeed, we might with propriety rally under the Antimasonic banner. But so long as that party continue their denunciation and disfranchisement of a large portion of our citizens, whom we deem entitled to the highest political confidence, and carry principles into the election which are diametrically opposed to our sense of equal rights, it would be no less than treason to the great Whig party of the Union, to concede to their uncompromising demands."

The meeting also thought proper to express their fullest confidence in HENRY CLAY as a candidate for the Presidency, at the same time

that they resolved to support JOSEPH RITNER for the office of Governor of the commonwealth. They also adopted the following resolutions :

“That the meeting held at West Chester on the 7th ult., in refusing to accede to the reasonable request of the meeting of Whigs held on the 6th, violated one of the plainest principles of justice.

“That we hereby pledge ourselves in future elections, not to support any ticket which shall not be formed upon fair and equitable principles, but that we will insist upon selecting such candidates as we shall deem our party entitled to, *without the dictation* or interference of any other party.

“That the Whigs of Chester county, who are disposed to unite with us upon the basis of the meeting held at the house of Joseph P. McClellan, in West Chester, on the 6th ult., be requested to meet at the same place in West Chester, on the first Monday in November next, *to consult upon such further measures as may be necessary* to promote the success of the *Whig cause*, and that the Secretaries give due notice thereof.”

It should not be forgotten at this juncture, that while the Whigs of Chester county have been assisting their Antimasonic political brethren to elect their Congressmen and State Senator for several years past, the Antimasons have, in the meantime, once defeated the election of a Whig Senator to the Congress of the United States. The Antimasons of Chester county have even gone so far as to adopt public resolutions, approving the course of their members of the Legislature who voted for Richard Rush, although they thereby gave the Senator to the Jackson men, in preference to John Sergeant. The only Antimasonic member from Chester county who voted for a Whig Senator, has never since been nominated for any office.

Under such circumstances, can any reasonable objection be made to the Whigs meeting together by themselves, to consult upon such measures as may be necessary to promote the Whig cause? Are the Whigs prepared to concede the point, that no man who has ever been a Mason shall be elected to office, without going through the process of what the Antimasons technically call “renunciation?” We appeal to the great Whig party of the Union, whether such men deserve to be ranked among their political brethren. If the time has indeed come, when, to call a man a “Masonic Whig,” is the signal of political denunciation and political disfranchisement, what has become of our equal rights and liberties, of freedom of speech and of the press, and of our boasted principles of toleration?

ISAAC THOMAS,
ZIBA PYLE,
EUSEBIUS TOWNSEND,
TOWNSEND HAINES,
THOS. S. WOODWARD,
AMOS FREDD,

Committee of Correspondence.

WHIG MEETING.

At a meeting of the WHIGS of Chester county, held at the house of Joseph P. McClellan, in West Chester, on Monday, Nov. 5, 1838, in pursuance of a prior meeting at Downingtown before the late election.

JOHN MARSHALL, of West Goshen, was chosen President,
JOHN JAMES and BRINTON DARLINGTON, Vice Presidents, and
ALLEN CHANDLER and FERDINAND E. HAYES, Secretaries.

On motion of William H. Dillingham, Esq., a committee of thirteen was appointed to consider and report the necessary steps to be taken to explain and carry into effect the views and objects of the meeting.

The committee were,

WILLIAM H. DILLINGHAM, Esq.	EUSEBIUS TOWNSEND,
WILLIAM INGRAM,	THOMAS TRAVILLA,
DAVID TOWNSEND, Esq.	THOMAS VANDIVER,
JOHN GILLIES, Esq.	MATTHIAS PENNYPACKER, Esq.
NORRIS TEMPLE,	CALEB SWAYNE,
BENJAMIN F. HAINES,	EPHRAIM WILSON.
THOMAS S. WOODWARD,	

The committee having retired, the meeting was addressed by Townsend Haines, Esq., in an eloquent and appropriate manner.

The committee reported the following address and resolutions, which were read, considered, and unanimously adopted.

TO THE WHIGS OF CHESTER COUNTY.

FELLOW-CITIZENS—In a free government, where the people choose their own rulers, we are necessarily divided into great political parties. This arises from the constitution of our nature, and does not necessarily imply a want of patriotism in one party more than in another. It may be conceded that few men would deliberately and intentionally ruin their country; and it is no less true that a readiness to make all the sacrifices which the public good requires, is seldom found. A government which constantly refers itself to the people, to pass upon the conduct of their rulers in all its vast, and various and complicated concerns, requires not only a high standard of virtue, but a high degree of intelligence.

We should be careful, therefore, neither to arrogate infallibility to ourselves, nor impute, unnecessarily, intentional error to our political opponents.

Parties first took ground under this government, as Federalists and Anti-Federalists, with reference to the adoption of the Constitution. The latter soon changed their name to that of Republicans, and then again to that of Democrats, being the party who generally went against all concentration and perpetuation of power. In those times, the prominent points of controversy were Jay's treaty, the funding system, the standing army, and the navy—how much jealousy should be kept alive towards Great Britain, and how much sympathy should be extended to republican France. War came; the country was then agitated with questions as to its justice, and its expediency. The army and navy fought themselves into favor, the necessity for a National Bank seemed

to be demonstrated; the war ended; old party topics passed away, and the fierceness of party spirit was hushed during the administration which succeeded.

When John Quincy Adams and Gen. Jackson were brought into the field, there was a re-cast. The former had left the Federalists and joined the Democrats, and the latter was held by many to have left the Democrats and joined the Federalists, upon the strength of his letter to Monroe.

The popularity of the Chieftain proved too strong for the Statesman, and in the pride of his strength the Military Hero established a party of his own. He gave it the impress of his character and name, infusing into it his own feelings and prejudices—stimulating it to bitterness, and fierceness and wrath.

The opposite party rallied under the name of WHIGS, seeking first and principally to maintain the constitution, guard the currency, support the judiciary and keep alive the spirit of patriotism, as contradistinguished from the selfishness of a clan. They have stood firm against the most terrific assaults—the Military Hero has passed off the stage of public life, and his successor would perpetuate his errors, without the power or popularity which gave them birth.

Thus the two great political parties stand arrayed. The principles involved, one would suppose, were broad enough to cover the entire political field. Still, Nullification has had its day at the south, and Antimasonry at the north, upon grounds identical with neither. An effort is now making to revive the latter and force its adoption upon the Whigs of this community. This cannot be permitted. The party had its origin, as we believe, in a misconception of the importance of the Masonic institution, is ephemeral in its nature, and the excitement should cease with the occasion. To maintain, at this day, that Masonry is the grand cause of political evil, is scarcely less than preposterous.

The Whigs of Chester county are forced, however, to take a stand and either sacrifice a portion of their friends, whom they charge with no political heresy, to the demands of what they hold to be a political heresy, or rally under their own separate banner—the great Whig banner of the Union.

In such a crisis as this it may be well to recur a little to the first principles of government, that we may understand the character and importance of the issue. It will, perhaps, be found that our contest is for all that is valuable in the social system, and that it is impossible for us to connect ourselves indissolubly with a party which regards the doctrines and acts of Gen. Jackson's administration as political evils of minor import, less to be deprecated than the existence of a Masonic lodge.

As Whigs, then, we hold that patriotism or love of country is the only principle upon which a republican government can be maintained—that private interest should always yield to the public good—that party is necessarily something less than country; and whoever makes war upon our commerce, our manufactures, our currency, the constitution, the judiciary, particular classes of men or particular rights and privileges enjoyed under the constitution, for the sake of *party*, prefers party to country.

The very end and object of government is to keep in check this spirit

of selfishness which predominates in our nature, and can only be restrained by force. Society is formed to promote the common welfare, to protect the weak against the strong, and to secure the greatest amount of good. It is upon these principles that men establish rights of person and of property, and band themselves together for their protection and defence. The very idea of government is identical with that of a great principle of evil prevalent in the human family, to be guarded against both from within and from without. Armies, navies, courts and prisons all tell us that there is something wrong in our nature. That this principle may be successfully counteracted and man enabled "to pursue his own true happiness," it would be impious to doubt. But whether there exists any state or condition of society now upon earth, in which man has attained a degree of wisdom adequate to this high object, remains to be determined. All former experience has proved that man had not virtue enough for self-government; in those efforts which were most successful, bad men soon got tired of hearing a good man called "the just," and elevated those of their own kind to places of power and trust, until corruption, fraud and violence brought anarchy in their train, and kings were again resorted to as a "happy accident." This is the brief history of all former republics. Kings are but the acknowledgment that men in all past time have felt themselves inadequate to the task of self-government. It seems as though they would fain create something nearer to divinity than themselves in which to confide their destinies, throw around it an imaginary perfectibility, wrap themselves up in the happy delusion and enjoy their dream. It is the very spirit of idolatry. Still, thus have men heretofore deluded and sacrificed themselves, bowing down in senseless homage to creations of their own wickedness and weakness. Many efforts have been made to rally human nature to a sense of its rights, and privileges and duties—to the honors and responsibilities, the blessings and the glories of free government. Up to our own time they have failed—signally failed. The causes of their failure are handed down to us; it is our own fault if we do not avail ourselves of their experience, and take warning by their fall.

Our experiment commenced under the most favorable auspices. Our ancestors brought with them to this country a degree of virtue, firmness of character and fixedness of principle, not common among the generations of men. With their own hands they subdued the wilderness, planted the fields, and as the sons of the forest retired, identified themselves with the soil. They had intelligence to know when they were oppressed, hearts to feel and souls to resist it. Schooled in trials, the struggle of the revolution brought out, and strengthened and confirmed their virtues. They paused for a brief space under the old confederation, but soon felt the necessity of a more efficient government. With the advantage of all former experience added to their own, they laid the foundations of this republic.

Half a century has elapsed, and they have gone to their rest. What is the result? What do we read in the past, what do we see around us, and what can we hope for the future? Does the spirit of our forefathers prevail in the administration of this government? Can it be made again to prevail? Or, is this people also to be given over to "strong delusion and to believe a lie?" It is to be feared that the same tendencies are here developed and developing, which have hurried all former republics to their ruin.

It is time we should pause, cast about us and see if there is not some solid ground on which to take a stand and make a final rally which shall prove successful. As Whigs, we have suffered ourselves, in repeated instances, to be carried so far by the notion of "*availability*," as to have forfeited all right to complain that things go wrong. We should know and have been taught that politics and everything else go wrong, while we prefer the expedient to the right. We must abandon all expedients which are short of what is right, avail ourselves of nothing but what is right, and go for truth and justice, come victory or come defeat. The moral influence of such a stand, however it may not accomplish all for which it aims, will reach and restrain those in power, while there is anything left upon which good influence can operate.

We must especially be on our guard against this constant appeal to the principle of selfishness—the ever-recurring temptation to prefer private interest to the public good, of which party leaders avail themselves. An inordinate and insatiate thirst for office seems to have taken possession of this whole people. What else could have prostrated our excellent constitution? *Rotation* is the unceasing cry, and even our judges must rotate with the rest. Thus it is, too, that party claims all the offices without regard to the public service; and this is unblushingly avowed. A party has actually attained power by these means, and entrenched itself, as it were, impregnably, behind the principle—that "to the victors belong the spoils." Such a spirit, when once awakened, is not readily satisfied—it grasps at every thing. Power becomes stronger than right, the democracy of numbers is arrayed against the pretended aristocracy of wealth, the rich made odious to the poor, and the mechanic and the laboring man excited against his neighbor. Institutions which have grown out of the improvements of society and become essential to our prosperity and comfort, are assailed on the very ground that they increase the facilities of acquiring property and add to its security. To such an extent have the minds of the people been inflamed against banks, that not only have men who profess to be governed by better principles been carried away, but men of no principle, who belong to the better party, join in the cry of "bank influence," whenever it suits their selfish ends. This is but another variation of the war cry of the "poor against the rich," and belongs to the levelling system. It is all an attack upon the rights of property, and whoever reflects for a moment will see that when the barriers erected by society to protect one species of property are broken down, the assault will be turned to another. The multitude who hold no real estate, may be as readily excited against the landed interest as against banks, when it suits the object of the levellers to give their prejudices that direction. All should set their faces against such appeals, as destructive of the social system. He is no friend to the mechanic and laboring man who would thus stir up prejudice, and should be regarded by them with distrust. Who is it that gives employment to the mechanic and the laborer, and how long is it before the mechanic or the laborer may become himself a man of wealth? We all remember that the man who accumulated the largest fortune ever realized in this Congressional district, began as a wood-chopper. There is scarcely a large estate in Chester county which was not originally acquired, and is not now enjoyed by the aid of the manual labor of its owner. The citizen who by his will distributed millions for public objects within our State, more than was ever given to the

public by a private citizen in any country, tells us in his will that he was a "mariner," and laid the foundation of his wealth by the labor of his hands and the sweat of his brow. It is the laboring man and the mechanic who soonest acquires wealth among us. The capitalist is useful to the mechanic, and the mechanic makes himself useful to the capitalist, each reciprocally aiding the other upon the true principle of the social system. Many a mechanic have Robert Coleman and Stephen Girard helped on to fortune, and many a furnace, house and ship has the mechanic built for them. If society were composed of idle capitalists alone, they would, no doubt, find it a sorry community and soon wish themselves basket makers: while a society composed exclusively of mechanics, would scarcely find themselves better off, without somebody to employ and pay them.

Capital is the great spur of industry, and credit the great substitute for capital. Where property is secure, honesty and industry give a man credit equivalent to capital itself. Industry and capital combined lead to successful enterprise, and thus are wealth and its attendant blessings acquired. Thus it is, in truth and in fact, that banks place the poor man upon a level with the rich. Banks are emphatically institutions of the people—they began with the people and belong to the people—they have everywhere tended to equalize the distinctions in society, and wherever an aristocracy of birth existed have thrown it into the shade. Banks are the life and soul of credit and of commerce, and through these means it may be confidently asserted, have done more to improve the social condition of man than all other human agencies. They have everywhere been the friend of the artisan, the mechanic and the laborer. They have everywhere been identified with the spirit of liberty and regarded with jealousy by arbitrary power. They have everywhere added to the comforts and improvement of society. They have been most frequently established by those who take most credit to themselves for professing democratic principles.

We are aware that it has become unfashionable, of late, and may be somewhat unpopular, thus to speak out in behalf of the banks, and do justice to their merits. Party has done this. Ten years ago, who would have thought of dragging the banks into politics. Men came into power with a chief whose popularity gave full play to his passions, they sought to use the late Bank of the United States for party purposes, and failing, made war upon it—fierce, furious and unrelenting war. The necessary means which it was compelled to use in its defence, were denounced as an interference in politics; as though it were perfectly right for the politicians to make war upon a bank, and very wrong for the bank to defend itself against the politicians. The mischief which has followed is felt by all, and it is time there should be an end of it. A blight has passed over the land. Commerce and manufactures have been prostrated, industry and enterprise paralysed, speculation encouraged, thousands ruined, and the country kept in a state of anxiety and suspense, until all realise the truth that a sound currency is as essential to business, as the atmosphere to animal life.

The specious argument for a Subtreasury now to be forced upon us, is, to separate the government from the banks, and allow the government to do its own banking. Thus the toast goes round:—"An Independent Treasury—whose officers responsible to the people, instead of privileged corporations, shall guard the people's money," &c. Now it

so happens, that these corporations are established by the people, for the good of the people, and have no PRIVILEGES SO IRRESPONSIBLE as those claimed for the officers of an INDEPENDENT Treasury. The people have learned what this sort of independence means, to their sorrow and their cost. But how would the argument apply to our private affairs. A distinguished Senator, for instance, addresses himself to a Chester county farmer who has a few thousand dollars by him, for which he has no immediate use, and which he cannot readily invest. He says—"Don't deposit that money in bank; give it to your children to keep. The bank, to be sure, has strong vaults and solid capital—is managed by men of integrity and ability; you have a good deal of stock in it yourself, and the money by being deposited there while not wanted, besides benefiting your own stock, may help to give employment to the laborer and the mechanic, to construct canals and rail roads, develop mines, and build up towns and cities. But all this gives the bank power; indeed, the power of the institution is just in proportion to the solidity of its capital, the safe-keeping of its deposits, the integrity and skill of its officers, and the good it does in the community. Now only think for a moment, if you should ask such an institution to appoint one of your sons as a clerk, and should be refused, and feel hurt by such refusal and seek to bring the bank to terms—do you not see that the very money you deposit there, helps it to defend itself against you? On the other hand, here are your own children, not much accustomed to handling money, to be sure, and with no very good places to keep it in, but they can soon learn, strong boxes can readily be made, and as they are all under age they are responsible to you; at any rate, they are your own children, have stronger claims upon you than the bank, and will be delighted to have the handling of the money." The farmer allows himself to be persuaded—calls his sons, and says to them—"Boys, here is a parcel of money I don't want to use at present, and I have determined to divide it among you to keep for me: John, here is five hundred dollars for you—Thomas, do you take five hundred—Richard, three hundred—Henry, one hundred, and keep it till I want it." At the end of a few months the father has occasion for a little money and applies to John—John has lost his deposit. He then applies to Thomas—Tom has spent his; then to Dick and Harry—one says that his was stolen from him, and the account of the other may be, perchance, that the rats got his.

We submit this as a fair illustration of the grand scheme of finance now presented to the people.

Considering the importance of these great national concerns, we should be glad to see the politics of our county under happier auspices. The party with whom the Whigs have generally acted for some years past, in this district, assume that all political evil is referable to Masonry, and that Antimasonry is the appropriate and only antidote. The fundamental error of their political organization is demonstrable from the fact, that in some States they have uniformly supported Jackson men and measures.

The Whigs of Chester county have conceded all that reason and justice should require; they have for years assisted to elect Antimasons to office; there is no lodge in existence among us, and we cannot see either policy, sense or propriety in keeping up this eternal war upon men who once, perchance, were Masons. It is with pain and shame we have been compelled to believe that a portion of our friends, professing to be

Whigs, would join in with the Antimasons in proscribing another portion. This has not, indeed, generally, been admitted, and is sometimes stoutly denied. Certainly it has been carried on by some process which does not meet the eye, and yet the fact is now distinctly and broadly asserted by one of our county papers, on the very eve of our meeting—is commended as the true Whig policy, and even flung at us, as the basis of all past union.

It matters not that this may have been done *indirectly*. When any portion of the Whig party consent to go into a convention for the nomination of candidates, with the *implied understanding* that no Whig shall be brought forward who is under Antimasonic proscription, every thing is conceded; there is no principle left to distinguish such Whigs from Antimasons. The only difference between them is in favor of the latter; for while the one professes to act from principle, the other, confessedly, abandons his principles. So long as the Antimasons and Whigs constitute distinct political parties, and the Whigs are not permitted to select their own candidates, how can we act together with anything like justice to our own friends. What sort of a Whig is he who consents, nay *agrees* that "Masonic Whigs" shall be excluded from nomination, and lends his aid to the proscription? Such men may claim to belong to our party in Chester county, but they will hardly find their claim allowed elsewhere.

These considerations are the more pressing, because of the unpromising demands of our Antimasonic brethren with regard to the Presidential question. We have once abandoned our candidate for theirs in Pennsylvania. What have we got by it? Another hint that we are expected again to yield. At their National Convention in Washington, where they could hardly have had a representation from a majority of the States in the Union, they resolved to adjourn to Philadelphia, and avowed the "unaltered and unalterable" determination then and there to nominate their candidate for the Presidency, to whom they would "inflexibly" adhere; and that they would give no State a chance for the honor, which should not send delegates to their council. They do not invite the Whigs to participate, and this "unaltered and unalterable" determination is now again held up to us under the sanction of the names of the Antimasonic State Committee. If this can be carried through, it is not worth while, indeed, for the Whigs to have any distinct party.

We rally, then, for a Whig National Convention; and as preparatory thereto, for a Whig County Convention and a Whig State Convention. We will attend no political meetings which denounce any portion of our friends, and invite no one to attend our meetings who will not reciprocate our fellowship. We arrogate no political perfection; we have expressed our preference for Henry Clay, but will go cheerfully and cordially for any candidate the Convention may select.

We have been complained of, and held up to our friends at home and abroad, as "factious" and "disorganizing," for the course we felt ourselves compelled to adopt in the late contest. Without stopping to inquire whether any part of the ticket would have obtained a majority in this county but for that course, we believe that Gov. Ritner's vote was increased by it, while it is well known that as many Antimasonic as Whig votes were cast for the opposite *Senator*, upon grounds not political. But let us examine the cause of complaint. It is assumed that

because the Whig Standing Committee called a meeting which extended to Antimasons, and refused to call a distinct Whig meeting, the Whigs could not meet and consult by themselves without violating their party allegiance. But who authorised the Standing Committee to call a joint meeting of Whigs and Antimasons, or to invite the Antimasons to attend our meetings *preliminary to forming a ticket*. They were not appointed as the joint Standing Committee of Whigs and Antimasons; they derived no authority to make such a call from the WHIG PARTY; the Antimasons still kept up their distinct organization, asserted their distinct principles, and distinctly proscribed a portion of our friends. The call, therefore, was *unauthorised*; any member of the Whig party had a right to object to it and refuse to meet under it; and however well meant, a little consideration should have led our friends to see that, while one true Whig *objected to it*, such a call ought not to have been made; it was particularly objectionable, not to say offensive, because made against the advice and remonstrances of so many Whigs.

It is the Standing Committee, then, who have departed from the rules of party discipline; and if the term 'disorganizer' were proper to be used among political brethren, we humbly submit that it is most applicable to those who assume the right to invite men of political principles different from our own to attend our meetings preparatory to forming a ticket, permit them to dictate to us who shall be our candidates, and thus endanger the very existence of the party.

In a word, it is clear that the Whig party can no longer be kept alive here, without a distinct and thorough organization. Unless the Whigs of Chester county are prepared to abandon their principles, we must go to work. The great interests of the country call upon us to make a rally. We have every thing at stake, and must incur sacrifices, take upon ourselves responsibilities, and encounter difficulties, if we would preserve the institutions of the country.

We make no war upon Antimasons—we merely stand upon the *defensive*; we have been ever ready to do them justice, and we have asked but justice from them. While this is denied us, we greatly mistake the character of the Whig party if we can longer act with them, and do solemnly protest against the right of any committee to compromit us to the support of anything but Whig principles, and against any union which is not based upon *equal rights* and *even-handed justice*.

Resolved, That this meeting will cordially and cheerfully support any candidate for the Presidency who shall be selected by a Whig National Convention.

Resolved, That we will unite with no party who do not yield to us the same justice, and meet us in the same liberal spirit which they claim for themselves.

Resolved, That the committee of correspondence be instructed to confer with our political friends in other parts of the State, upon the subject of a more thorough organization, and to urge upon them the expediency of holding a State Convention.

Resolved, That we hold all efforts to array one class of society against another upon the ground of distinctions in property or calling, all interference with the rights of property under the constitution, all claims of office as the rightful spoils of party, and all war upon the currency for the benefit of party, as contrary to the vital principles of free government.

Resolved, That we regard the Subtreasury scheme as the most bold and daring attempt ever made in a free government, to concentrate power in the hands of the Executive, and promote personal and political objects at the expense of the public welfare.

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to procure the publication, in pamphlet form, of the proceedings of each of our meetings, including the first call at this place, together with the address and resolutions now adopted; and that they also request their publication in such papers of the State as are friendly to our cause.

After the adoption of the address and resolutions, a committee from another meeting of Whigs convened in the borough, submitted a resolution which had been adopted by their meeting, proposing a joint committee of conference. Whereupon a motion was made and adopted that such committee be appointed, and the following gentlemen were named by the chair:—Townsend Haines, Esq., David Townsend, Esq., John Gillies, Esq., Eusebius Townsend and Jonathan Jones, Esq.

In pursuance of the last resolution, the chair appointed William Williamson, Esq., Ferdinand E. Hayes, Brinton Darlington, John W. Townsend and David Taylor a committee of publication.

On motion, the meeting adjourned.

JOHN MARSHALL, *President*.

JOHN JAMES,
BRINTON DARLINGTON, } *Vice Presidents*.

Allen Chandler,
Ferdinand E. Hayes, } *Secretaries*.

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